

Ramsay-Atkinson House
113 N. Fairfax Street
Alexandria, Virginia

HABS No. VA-464

HABS

VA

7. ALEX

80.

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington 25, D.C.

Ramsay-Atkinson House
113 N. Fairfax Street
Alexandria, Virginia

HABS No. VA-464

HABS
VA
7-ALEX
80

Present Owner: Miss Frona Matthews

Present Occupant and Use: Apartments

Description

Brick, Flemish Bond and Aquia stone trim. This building is paired with that adjoining at 115 N. Fairfax and the two were probably built contemporaneously. They are 3-bay compositions with gable roofs and dentilled cornices. Ground floor levels are only a couple of steps above the sidewalk. Outbuildings of the former are of particular interest, consisting of a brick kitchen and what was doubtless the servants' quarters (both remodelled for present-day living). Until recently there was evidence of a stable building behind.

Front vestibule and the present doorway are modern and the first floor has been stripped of original work. The upper portion of the stairway is old and exhibits interesting stair ends and compo urn ornamentation. Handsome cupboards and mantels are to be found in the second and third floor apartments.

Historical Data

Year of erection: Late 18th C.

Built for (first owner): Probably William Ramsay

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Probably William Ramsay

Notable events and occupants

Court and family documents indicate that the house just north of Ramsay's Alley was built by William Ramsay, before 1785. Ramsay was one of the founders of Alexandria, and served as trustee and Mayor. He was partner in the mercantile firm with John Caryle and later John Dixon. He owned the Royal George Tavern and numerous properties throughout town. An old plat owned by descendants shows now he divided his original holdings of Lots Nos. 46 and 47 among his eight children, William Jr., falling heir to the dwelling and lot on the northeast corner of Fairfax St. and the Alley. William Ramsay, Jr. disposed of it to Guy Atkinson in 1795.

Records of the Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia reveal that Atkinson added the structure at 115 N. Fairfax about 1797 and in that year his policies covered two 3-story dwellings with stores on the first floor. Interesting enough these shops are referred to a few years later as portrait studios of artists, Cephas Thompson and St. Memin.

References: Gay Montague Moore, Seaport in Virginia, Richmond, 1949,
Chapter 1. HABI form prepared by T. Russell Jones and
Worth Bailey, HABS, National Park Service.

Approved

Dick Sutton
Chief Architect

Date

Feb. 16, 1959

VA
4-ALFY
80-